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Preventing and Managing Electoral Violence as a Threat to Democracy in South Africa

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ABSTRACT South Africa is a country of overlapping multi-party divisions that has its origin in the historical antecedents of the apartheid regime. Rifts within and between political parties have often produced severe levels of violence, especially after the 1994 election and have resulted in arson, looting and loss of lives. This study that utilized the Przeworski Democratic Peace Theory argued that the outbreak of electoral violence in South Africa is a reflection of the failure of democratic institutions, norms, values, and democratic ideals that do not meet the expectations of the people and is thus promoting a vision of chaos and violence in the country. It recommends a fight against poverty and youth unemployment, provision of justice, opening up of political space to accommodate all sections of the country and equitable distributions of resources coupled with the strengthening of democratic institutions are tools needed for sustainable national peace in the country.